

+ 115

The Peace-Offering :
O R,
Samuel brought into the Sanctuary.

A
S E R M O N
Encouraging from Scripture Precedent
T H E
Decent Appearance,
A N D
O R D E R L Y P E R F O R M A N C E S
O F T H E
Charity Children
At Divine Service.

With the many BLESSINGS that attend their Pious Education, and prosper the Promoters of it.

Preach'd *June 25. 1713.* at a Meeting of several of the Gentry and Clergy of the Church of *England*, at *St. Mary Tower in Ipswich*, for the Support of one of the *Charity-Schools* there.

By WILLIAM CURTIS, M. A. Minister of *Harwich*,
Corresponding Member of the Society for Promoting
Christian Knowledge, and Chaplain to the Right Ho-
nourable the Lady *Howard of Effingham*.

L O N D O N :

Printed by W. Downing for *John Wyat* at the *Rose* in *St. Paul's Church-Yard*, and are to be Sold by Mr. *Truelove* of *Ipswich*, Mr. *Jefferies* of *Harwich*, and Mr. *Blithe* of *Colchester*. M DCC XIII.

The Process of Printing

is much brought into the same manner.

A SERMON

on the subject of the same

By the Rev. Mr. [Name]

at the [Location]

on the [Date]



the [Name] of the [Location]

of the [Name] of the [Location]

of the [Name] of the [Location]

of the [Name] of the [Location]

of the [Name] of the [Location]

of the [Name] of the [Location]

of the [Name] of the [Location]

To the Magistrates, Gentry,
and Others, Inhabitants of
the Borough of *Harwich*.

My good Parishioners,

THIS Discourse, tho' preach'd to a
neighbouring Corporation, had an
e in its Composition to the Benefit of my
arge, which Duty and Gratitude oblige
e principally to intend. The constant and
pious Provision you have ever made for
orks of Piety and Mercy, makes it evident
the World, that it is not your being coldly
fected with a Charity of this kind, that has
nder'd you from coming into a Design so
viting, so Necessary, and so generally Ap-
proved: The Indisposition was in the Objects.
e confluence of Strangers during the War
nder'd the Temporal Necessities of our Poor
r from being Clamorous; and kept their
ands so fully employ'd, that they seem'd
tle at leisure to attend to their defects in
e one thing needful, a Religious Educa-
tion.

The Epistle Dedicatory.

tion. Which Obstacle the Peace has now happily removed, and set before us large Opportunities of doing good: The swarm of Comely Children wandring about our Streets as desolate, but not yet irretrievable to Goodness, move me to request, in the Name of Him whose Kingdom is of such that you would look upon their Danger with Compassion, and rescue them from the Contagion of Idleness and Licentiousness, those fatal Inlets of Youth to Vice and all manner of Wretchedness. How serviceable to the and all our Best Interests a Charity-School will be, especially establish'd upon such steady Principles, and so liberally supported as that in View, the subsequent Pages may hope to apprise you, and withal how much I am

Yours, in the Concerns of our
common Christianity,

W. C.

I SAM

I SAM. Chap. II. Ver. 18, 19.

Samuel ministred before the Lord, being a child girded with a linen ephod.

Moreover his Mother made him a little Coat and brought it to him from Year to Year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly Sacrifice.

THE exactness with which the Inspired Writers relate what befel some of the greatest Worthies and most eminent Servants of GOD in former Days, in the minutest circumstances of their Childhood, before they came Years and Abilities of providing for themselves, shews the Necessity of Publick Provision for a Religious and Vertuous Education, even to the most Innuous and Toward Dispositions.

Since no less Persons than *Moses* and *Samuel* were educated; and that by Benefactors of such Rank and Figure as to distinguish this peculiar Charity, among the best becoming and most beneficent Offices at the noblest of either Sex can engage their Interest and endeavour to promote.

The former of these Little Ones being by the immediate direction of Heaven cast into the Arms of the Daughter of the King of *Egypt*, and the latter the Vow and Dedication of his Pious Mother, recommended to the Care of *Eli*, GOD's High-Priest.

And tho' the Lady was a Heathen and Alien to the Commonwealth of *Israel*, and the Magistrate few hands charged with a fatal Remisness in the Government of his own Children, yet they both were faithful to their Providential Charge, they both esteemed their

their Pupils as their Sons, trained them with a p
vident Inspection and tender Care, and had the
season'd betimes with all vertuous Principles a
useful Knowledge.

Young *Moses* had the Accomplishment of bei
Acts 7.22. *Learnt in all the Knowledge of the Egyptians*, but
Child *Samuel* had the superior Advantage of bei
early Initiated into the Mysteries of the True Reli
on, and spending his best, that is, his youthful Da
in the Courts of the Lord's House.

Where *David* esteemed it an honourable Prefe
Psa. 84.10. ment to have an Employ, tho' but as a Doorkeeper
But *Samuel* ministred before the Lord, not in a Sacer
dotal Sense of Blessing the People, consecrating the
Sacrifices, or teaching them the Law; for he was n
as yet establish'd to be a Prophet: But he Ministre
in such Services as his tender Capacities might sustain
in giving his Attendance to his Master *Eli*, and prob
ably bearing a part in the sacred Musick to cele
brate his Maker's Praise; but chiefly in giving him
self to be thoroughly Instructed in the Will of God

And to distinguish him as a Person dedicated to
Religion, he was girded with a linen Ephod; the Veste
ment of his Tribe, and suited to Festival and Joyous
Occasions, such as *David* put on when he danced be
fore the Lord with all his Might.
Sam. 6. 4.

Thus the goodly Child, in a comely Apparel, mi
nistred to the Honour of his Maker, and the unspeak
able Satisfaction of his Benefactors and Well-wishers
especially his Parents, who had this additional Com
fort in the Service of God, to see the Child the
had given to it perform his little Part so well.

And as for his Encouragement and Support, his
Mother, when she came with her Husband to offer the
yearly Sacrifice, brought him a little Coat from year to year

It was by her Devotion in the Tabernacle that the
Son of her Desires was obtained; as visible an Advan
tage of Publick Worship, as it is a signal Instance

Children are the gift and heritage that cometh of the Psa. 127. 4.

By her grateful designation the Child was put under this Sacred and Religious Nurture, by her constant Provision his tender and beauteous Body was gently attired; and as it might well be expected in a Son of so many Prayers, set forwards with pious Endeavours, the progress of his Education plentifully repaid all the Labour and Care employ'd about him.

The Child Samuel grew and was in favour both with 1 Sam. 2, 26.
Lord and also with Men; and afterwards honour-

ably discharg'd, in the most exalted Stations, the fruit of his Education, both to Church and State, a Faithful Prophet and a Righteous Magistrate.

This bright instructive Scene of Sacred History, remarkable in all its Circumstances, and so favourable to our present Undertaking, will afford us both Information and Warrant in the Religious Educating and Cloathing poor Children, and may assure our hearts before God in this Deed, as entirely consonant to his Word, conformable to his Providence, and agreeable to his Will. For,

As there is no Affection God has implanted in human Nature more ardent and operative, than the feelings of a tender Mother yearning towards Children of these helpless Years, you have it here regulated with a laudable Discretion and unaffected Piety. therefore I may venture to recommend this conduct of *Hannah* as an unexceptionable Precedent.

There being no higher engagement to Men of Reason and serious Religion, than the standing for all the Blessings of Heaven; You see them gloriously attending, effectuating and crowning their Charitable and Pious Design: And therefore I present you, from the Treasury of Scripture, with

with the choice Fruits of *Samuel's* Education, I hope to furnish forth a good prevailing Argument go along with your Endeavours of like nature.

III. I shall apply both the foregoing Particulars to the carrying on and encouraging that *Labour* of which now lies upon your hands, that the guidance of the Example, and the weight of the Motive direct and influence your Hearts and Minds to accomplishing a *Charity* which is indeed the *very* of *Perfection*.

First for the particular Instance before us of happy disposal of the Child *Samuel*, in the most eligible Method of Education.

Children, like other Goods of Nature, may be either a Blessing or a Curse to their Parents and to the Common Welfare, according as they are managed and as they prove. Their natural tendency is to be worse; they are no otherwise than as a blank Page that will certainly be sullied by neglect, but may easily receive a lovely and lasting Impression; and their Parents, or, in their stead, their Patrons of Concern to give it them.

It was the Fault of *Peninnah* to value herself more upon the bearing of Children, than the well educating of them. *Hannah* was destitute of this Comfort which her Husband made up to her by an exceeding tenderness. He was too just a Man to mislike her for a Misfortune out of her power to redress. Her Rival cast it in her Teeth, and imputed it to Reproach to *Hannah* that she was Childless. To be Barren was indeed esteem'd as somewhat opprobrious by a People whose distinguishing Blessing it was to multiply. Gen. 22. *Multiply as the Sand on the Sea-shore*; the glory of 17. Sex in those Days was to be a Mother in Israel, in hope of numbring the *Messiah* among early Posterity, as the natural and just foundation of Prayer for Fertility.

at *Hannah* had a nearer Aim of Religion in asking
 Son; not so much to preserve a Name, adorn a Fa-
 mily, or improve an Estate, as to become a useful
 Member to the Commonwealth, to do GOD and his
 Church good Service in this World, and to augment
 the number and happiness of the Blessed in the other.
 This was the origin of her Vow, and the fountain of
 her Desires; a divine temper of Mind, abundant in
 Hopes, not only of obtaining the Blessing, but also
 continuing it; and (as they are but fading Com-
 forts) an excellent Preparative for a Contentful Re-
 nunciation of the most promising Children, if He who
 gave them, and best knows for what He sent them
 into the World, shall please to call them away: *It is*
the Lord, says submissive Eli, let him do what seemeth ^{1 Sam.}
good. ^{3. 18.}

Such a Blessing, O had it been but continu'd! was
 happily procur'd for us all by the incessant Prayer of
 our ANNA, our Political Parent, whose delight is in
 the Sanctuary: The Royal Branch shot forth laden
 with the Kingdom's Hopes, and pregnant with
 coming Vertues; but, alas! too soon torn from us
 by untimely Destiny, as if only shewn to teach us
 the greatness of our Loss, convince us of our heavy
 demerits, and quicken our joint Endeavours, in re-
 sistance to that epidemical Contagion of Vice, that
 has made the wretched Cause so dear a Life could be suf-
 fered to abide no longer on this sinful Land.

This Mirrour of Maternal Piety in the Text, leads
 on to some farther Stations expressly mention'd ac-
 cording to the Order and Advancement of Humane
 Education.

1. *Hannah* having thus obtain'd a Son by the effi-
 cacy of Prayer, and weaned him, and nursed him up
 Years capable of imbibing the Rudiments of Learn-
 ing, and a liberal Education, took care, in the first
 place, to have him instructed in the Principles of
 true Religion. She deny'd herself, for the Child's

B

good,

good, that fond Satisfaction, and all those little Endearments which affectionate Mothers find in the Company of their pretty Innocents. She knew her good Creator was equally tender of him, and abundantly more able to provide for his Well-being. And therefore determined to Lend him, or rather Return him *to the Lord*, from whom she receiv'd him; to partake of his *Nurture and Admonition*, by whose Blessing he had been Conceived, and be compleatly furnished for his Service, that he might answer the end of his Creation, and be instrumental to his Maker's Glory.

What could she do better for the Child, than, in performance of her Vow, to bring him directly under the Shadow of his Wings, and into Gods most immediate presence?

1 Sam.
1.28.

What safer and more pleasant Habitation could she chuse for him than the Tabernacle? And what more honourable Employ than the Service of the *King of kings*?

Thus determin'd, in her Vow and Purpose, she did not question to find Assistance and Encouragement from the Ministers of God; and therefore repairs, with the Child, directly to the High-Priest *Eli*; by whom he was kindly received, as a Lamb of his Flock, and brought into the securest part of the Fold, and his Parents discharg'd of their Vow and sent home with the Blessing of God, to make prosperous the after part of their Lives. But *Hannah* did not cease to take any farther Care of the Child, as if she had thus wholly acquitted herself of all her Mother's Part and Duty, by bringing the Child into the Sanctuary, and recommending him to the instruction of the Minister. For,

1 Sam.
2.20.

2. She kept a due regard to the Health and Decency of her *Samuel*, in the garb and habit of his Body, as well as the temper and improvement of his Mind. Children, like tender Plants, must be housed and shelter'd from the Severities of the Climate,

they be nip'd in the Bud; they must be rear'd with careful Hands, and guarded against the daily Harms that assail them.

And indeed, all is little enough for their Security, were not the Almighty to charge his Providence in peculiar manner with the Tuition of Children, as well as to imprint in every mortal Eye a Tenderness to look after them. 'Twould be impossible the youngest of them should ever hold out to Years of Maturity, Nature has both Cloathed and Armed the young of all other Creatures: Only the shiftless Race of Man is left to the Art and Industry of his own Kind, and the Vertues and Endowments of our Minds to prompt and enable us to provide for the daily Necessities of one another, and to bear these Gardens. Good Men have always shewn a sensible compassion this way; *Job could not bear to see the fatherless perish for want of Cloathing, or any poor without covering.* He took the desolate Youth under his protection, and brought 'em up with him as a Father, *So that their Loins blessed him and they were made warm with the Fleece of his Flock.*

But whilst the Mother lives and prospers, the best delegate, under Providence, is herself; she provides the Raiment by her own Industry, and vests 'em in it with her own Hands. Tho' the arraying of his Mind with the Defence and Ornament of Learning may be something above the reach, or, at least, foreign to the Employ of the tender Sex; yet the cloathing of his Body, so long as God gives the means to do it, is what the Bowels of a Mother cannot bear to see neglected.

Hannah looked upon this as her own Work, being destitute of Materials, to make and provide for *Samuel every Year a little Coat*: As he was to appear constantly in the Tabernacle, 'twas requisite that every thing should appear decent and cleanly in the Presence and Palace of the Most Holy, and in

the Courts of the Lord's House ; which called this Present of *Hannah* as oft as she came up with her Husband to offer the yearly Sacrifice.

Acts of Goodness and Piety are very happily wedded together, and ought never to be separate : This was the properest time for her to testify her grateful Esteem of this Pledge of the Divine Munificence when she prostrated herself a Votary to the most High God before whom he served.

Thus was the whole Procedure conducted with a becoming mixture of Devotion and Charity. What could be managed with a more laudable Piety or tenderer Affection ? How could she better have consulted the real Benefit of the Child ? What more prudent Method could be taken to set him forth with all due Advantages, in the way of saving Knowledge ? And having, in the first place, secured his Soul's eternal good, what remained but to accommodate her secondary Care to the Necessities of the Body, in decently arraying it ? Thus provision is made for the whole Man. In tracing of which we are come the whole length of the Parent's or Provider's Duty. Let us next exalt our Thoughts to the magnifying our heavenly Father's Bounty in rewarding it with so many eminent Benefits and prosperous Consequences.

Secondly, The Divine Acceptance of this Offering was very gracious, and the Blessings it brought down from Heaven eminently great. So just is the Observation upon which our Church grounds one of her most excellent Collects, *That GOD never faileth to help and govern those whom he bringeth up to his stedfast Fear and Love.* And so inviolable the Promise that *whatsoever is given unto the Lord shall be paid again.* This Loan of *Hannah* was repaid.

1. In the general Advancement of Piety and Religion, which is the greatest Benefit that can be conferred on humane Society ; and this *Samuel* found

22. after
Trin.

Prov. 49.
17.

very low ebb at his first appearing at the Helm. The Practices of the Jewish People were then very remote from the strictness of the Divine Laws. Which were violated **even under the** more immediate Presence of God that gave them.

Gross Abuses were crept into the Tabernacle, during the Presidency of the good old indulgent Pontiff, **Levi** and corpulent of Body, and easy and indolent of Mind; the Avarice, Hypocrisy, and scandalous immorality of his Sons, *made the Lord's People to transgress: And when they made themselves vile he restrained them not.* In these Licentious Times, some turned Thieves, others grew openly Prophane, the Prophets Prophecy'd false Things, and the People lov'd to have it so.

Every one that was pleased to have any, model'd Religion by his own Humour and Fancy; and the generality had so little Zeal in them for the Honour and Service of the true GOD, that they suffer'd the Ark itself to be taken from them, and could stand still and see the whole establishment of their Religion overturn'd before their Eyes.

In this confusion of Affairs *Samuel* was called to the Ministry instead of *Eli*, who was overwhelm'd in those Misfortunes he should have seasonably redress'd. And presently another face of things appear'd; the Enemies of *Israel* were disabled from acting their malicious Designs.

Those that were for a moderate mix'd Religion, and would have reconciled GOD and *Dagon* together, (but in *Dagon's* House) were dismay'd at the Difficulty and Danger of the Attempt, and shuffl'd it off from one to another, till at last the Ark of GOD was happily restor'd to the Tabernacle again in *Shiloh*.

Thus Religion flourish'd with equal Purity and Prosperity, under this vigilant and faithful Prophet; *the hand of the Lord was against the Philistines all the days of Samuel: and there was Peace also with the Amorites all his time.*

1 Sam. 4: 18.

1 Sam. 2: 24.

3: 13.

1 Sam. 7: 13, 14.

2. What

2. What was lent to the Lord in *Samuel's* Education, was repay'd to the State also by the same hand. For God raised up this poor Child, according to *1 Sam. 2. 8.* *Mother's Prophecy, out of the dust, to set him among the Princes of the earth; the greatest of the Judges, and the Restorer of the Peace of Israel: He was a vigorous Asserter of their ancient Laws and just Liberties; he did all that could be done to have up the present Establishment, which was then a Theocracy; and was hardly prevail'd upon to change tho' for the best of all Institutions of human Government, that of Monarchy.*

He brought the People to yield true Allegiance to their Sovereign, and taught them that *Obedience* *1 Sam. 15. 22.* *was better than Sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of Rams.* He gave them right Notions of that disguis'd *British* Doctrine *Resistance*, and shew'd them that *Rebellion* *1 Sam. 7. 16.* *was as the Sin of Witchcraft, and Stubbornness as Iniquity and Idolatry.* And for his own part he was an unass'd and unwearied Minister of Justice, he went on Circuit to *Bethel*, and *Gilgal*, and *Mizpeh*, and judg'd *Israel* in all those Places.

Before his Time it was a common thing for *1 Sam. 2. 13.* *in* Trust to enrich themselves and grow fat, by offering the publick Offerings: But *Samuel*, when dismiss'd himself of the Affairs of State, made it appear how steady and uncorrupt the Religious Principles he had imbib'd kept him, amidst all the Temptations of a publick Post; he look'd upon himself as advanc'd not to mend his own Fortunes, but to band well those of his Country; and therefore acted uprightly, and acquitted himself with a good Conscience; and when he resigned his Charge he vindicated his unblemish'd Honour and Justice to all the World, in that memorable Appeal, saying, *1 Sam. 13. 3.* *have I taken, or whose Asses have I taken, whom have I defrauded or oppressed, or at whose hands have I received any bribe.* A Protestation founded upon so much

ity and Truth; that it was received with Com-
 ndation and Applause both from God and Man.
 righteous a Magistrate, and so worthy a Benefactor
 the State was this our *Samuel*; for God *was with*
from the time that he hanged upon his Mothers breasts,
look whatsoever he did it prosper'd.

The advantages of his Education appear'd hap-
 conspicuous in the Conduct and Government of
 own Life, which was as the Way of the Just al-
 ys is, *a Light still shining more and more until the* Prov. 4. 18.
last day: He not only practiced Vertue and Godli-
 himself, but eminently promoted it in others: He
 a considerable Bequest towards the building of the I Chron. 26. 28.
 mple, for which Materials were getting ready be-
 his long Sleep came. And when his vacancy from Ecclef. 4. 5.
 Publick Affairs would give him leisure to attend ult.
 he was a great Promoter of this sort of Education, I Sam. 19.
 which himself had experienc'd the Benefit, and 20.
 same President, if not Founder of a College of
 carites in *Ramab*, his City, whose chief Employ-
 nt was to learn the Will, and celebrate the Praises
 the great Governour of the World.

And we have yet one exuberant Instance of the
 vine Bounty flowing in another private Chan-
 and emptying it self into the Bosom of the Pa-
 ts and Offerers of this Gift. They shall be filled
 th the improving Comfort of seeing this their
 ild grow before the Lord, and answer all the
 es of the most indulgent Parent, and all the ends
 the most Religious Education. *Hannab* shall be
 ssed with the constant and tender Affection of her
 sband, *which is better to her than ten sons*; and I Sam. 1. 8.
 he recover God shall visit them with Family Prospe-
 , and send them, in lieu of this Gift, this Cha-
 -Child, three Sons and two Daughters beside; a I Sam. 2.
 acious Return for the first Fruits lent to him 20.
 d bring their gray Hairs to the Grave without a-
 Sorrow occasion'd by the ill Courses of Children,
 and

and with hopes of better things to come. Now are come to the Summ of these Benefits: What vast Encrease is here from so small a Beginning That the Teaching and Cloathing a poor Child should not only raise up an accomplish'd Man, but bring such ample returns of Joy and Comfort to kind Supporters of its Infancy, but contribute to Succour of a decaying Religion, and the Establishment of a mighty Kingdom.

III. What I was to do in the last place, will naturally succeed, if your Judgments have not ready prevented me in applying it to what is uppermost in your Thoughts. You have here, in this cred History, both a perfect Exemplification of Nature and Offices of that excellent Charity are associate upon; and a specimen of the precious Fruits it naturally produces when it lights on a fertile Soil, and all favourable Circumstances concur. When there is nothing wanting in the Parent's Provisions, nor in the ingenuous Disposition of the Child, nor in the careful Inspection of the Priest, nor in the bountiful Provision of the *Tutors and Governours*.

Such a Fellowship of Love, so close a Combination of all Orders and Degrees, in doing good, must needs be effectual, by God's Blessing, to the bringing to Perfection such a Work as this.

A Work of which it is a sufficient Testimony in the Sanctuary, that it is a Transcript of the Testament. Whatsoever the most Tender and Pious Mother is powerful in her Affections, but confin'd in her Abilities, can do or wish to be done for her dutiful Children, whatsoever a *Hannah* could do or wish for *Samuel*, that do ye for these your Adopted ones.

Yours by a providential Claim, and the endearing Titles of Goodness and Protection, like derelict Land, when they become the Heritage of the next Possessor, when their Father and Mother forsaketh them, the Lord taketh them up, by the Hands of your charitable

Now compassion, to which they are more indebted than
 What to their natural Parents, from whom they de-
 ginning the Life and Being, which wou'd otherwise have
 or Children but miserable: *For that the Soul be without know-* Pro. 19. 2
 Man, *it is not good.*

Your first and chiefest Care is to remedy this
 stress, by bringing these Children into the Tem-
 By instructing them in the Service of God,
 have rescued them from such an abandon'd
 as must have infallibly expos'd them to Rags
 Wretchedness, to a contemptible Habit of Body,
 a profligate Temper of Mind, a prey to all
 manner of Vice. These poor Lambs, straying with-
 the Fold, must have been left destitute and help-
 in the Ranges of the Devouring Lyon, had you
 kindly taken them out of the way of his infer-
 Toils. Like faithful Servants of your Lord, you
 gone out into the high ways and hedges and compell'd Luke 14
 to come in that his House may be filled. You have 23.
 only brought 'em off from the Desarts of Idle-
 and Ignorance, but you have placed them here
 Shiloh, in the most safe and fruitful place where John 10.
 may go in and out and find Pasture. Their 19.
 frequent and orderly Appearance in the Sanctuary
 takes them no unprofitable part of this Congrega-
 You have taught them to minister before the
 and, and do him Service in their proper Places
 Capacities: They are instructed to assist his
 best in the Recitations and Responses, and you
 have made 'em perfect in one Office, which best be-
 comes their Simplicity of Manners and the depen-
 dency of their Condition, with singleness of Heart,
 melody of Voice, to praise God for their Bene-
 fitors, and set forth the Benefits of their Education,
 singing in his Courts *with Hymns and Spiritual Songs.* Psal. 144
 A goodly Sight in the Sanctuary! More glorious 12.
 in the polished corners of the Temple. Eclipsing
 Beauties of the Painter's Art, a Sight most pre-
 cious

Mat. 18. 10

cious in the Eyes of God our Saviour, whose Presence fills this awful place. He delighted in the Children's Conversation whilst on Earth, and is this present interceding in their Behalf, for an inheritance with his heavenly Father. Before whose their tutelary Angels stand and rejoice to see them in so prosperous a way to be equal to the best of the Benefactors in Goodness here, and to their heavenly Guardians themselves in Happiness hereafter. At present they are cloathed with a veil of Flesh, and surrounded with Infirmities that attend this earthly Tabernacle; having other Indigencies beside the Spiritual ones to be provided for, and therefore, in these your Offerings, these lively Sacrifices may

Be acceptable, you wisely provide that they not defective in any part; all Darkness and Impurity being banish'd from within, your second Concern that the outward appearance of these little Worshipers may be cleanly and beautiful; an Ornament to the Temple, amiable in the Eyes of their Benefactors, and all Lovers of Piety. 'Twere indeed but a small benefit compared with those Endowments with which you furnish their Minds, should you cloath their Bodies with *Purple and fine Linen*, and make them *sumptuously every day*. Nevertheless, their whole and decent Habit will be much subservient to your Grand Design, it will shield them from those mean Practices, which are generally the effects of a mean Appearance.

These *Samuels* have no *Elkanahs* nor *Hannahs* to yourselfs to do this good Office for them; while their innocent Looks bespeak, and are answer'd from every Breast with such an Affection, as the low esteem of their Parents makes in them ineffectual. The Work that peculiarly commends it self to the tender Sex, securing their regards of Decency and Modesty.

There may be more of the Youth, who, though this Misfortune, disabled to appear in such an

seem

bly, yet beseech, and even call for it with a na-
Right, that they also may have a *little Coat every*
to come with into the Sanctuary. How often
we want of this made an excuse for loitering away
Hours of Prayer, the bane of so many Poor,
young and Old? Remove this Obstacle, as far as it
in your way: We come in a good Day to request
Blessing, even as *David* once did in Sheep-shear-
time, but to much different Tempers, and there-
may hope for better Success.

In this time of Peace and Plenty, whilst our Wool-
Manufactures go forth so freely to adorn the swar-
Inhabitants of the North and South, more misera-
in their Religion than in their Climate, would
it be pity that these Angelick Creatures, our Ci-
zens and Fellow-Christians, the Sons and Daugh-
of our *Jerusalem*, should beg in vain, to be
cloathed with the Fleeces of our Flocks? What bet-
Peace-Offering can we return to God, or by
his Hands more proper than these his Receivers?
Tis true, the Poor are forbidden to be anxious in
nothing, because Providence, that so finely arrays
Lillies of the field will much more cloath these little ones, *Matt. 6.*
he will do it by your Hands, as the faithful Stew-
of his Bounty.

And this, tho' not the most excellent, may yet
open to be the most expensive part of your Charge,
therefore the necessity of the Charity, as well as
order of the Text, may render it not improper
have touch'd upon it.

Should now offer something by way of En-
agement, were not this Work so perfect in its
that it needs no President to plead for it, nor
Arguments to justify it, being liable to no Dif-
ficulties nor Objections, but only those of Penuri-
ness and a narrow Spirit. Were there any Motives
to excite to it, where 'tis so studiously carri-
on, I should promise my self most from those al-
ready

ready specify'd in the Case of *Samuel*, of its being much for the Credit and Propagation of our Religion, and no less serviceable to the peace, order and welfare of our Civil Affairs. However, nothing that Duty requires to recognize the Blessings of GOD in whatever part of our Lives and Actions we meet them; and in none do they more abound than in pursuing this most useful Charity.

1. For the Prosperity of the Church: The way to adorn our Faith, and establish it in the Hearts and Affections of Mankind, is thus to follow the admirable Methods by which it was first planted. When the Gospel was first delivered to the World, *Psa. 8. 2: out of the mouth of babes, God ordained its strength:* nothing restored it with more advantage at the formation, than the converting the old Nurseries of Ignorance and Sloth, into Seminaries of useful Education. Happy had it been for the Land, had it been universally so! But however, it pleased GOD that the plain and charitable manner of conveying its intelligible and sound Doctrines, gave our Religion way beyond all the malicious oppositions of the inveterate Copartners against it, *Papery* and *Fanaticism*.

And what may we not hope from this present revival and wonderful improvement of the same Spirit of Charity? Prejudice it self is not so blind and obstinate but that, seeing such good Works in such shining light, it must glorify your Father which is in Heaven. Next to a good Conscience, it is the greatest Happiness, to have the good we do so ordered that it may be well spoken of. Thus gainsayers shall be silenced, at least, if they won't be convinc'd; surely they will at length be ashamed so perversely to oppose those in their other Righteous Designs, who have made it manifest to the World, that they have no other Interests at Heart, but the concerns of Religion, and a zealous promoting the Publick Good.

tion, that old Leaven that sowres some of the best Actions of humane Life, shall never penetrate this solid Beneficence, but in its Poyson here; such Charity *envieth not*, and therefore cannot, unless very unnaturally, be forced and mated with a Party aim. An universal tendency to this Consent, in time, (it may be hoped) cement our divided Interests, and happily close our Breaches. For, surely, when *Pis-
tis* is to be restored to its Dominion, the *Hearts of Judah and
Israel will join as the Heart of one Man, and fly upon the
elders of those Philistines*, Vice and Ignorance, and pluck
Spoil out of their Teeth. This Charity duly cultivated,
prove a sovereign Expedient to promote Unity and Peace;
especially that shall have gone thro' this Education, will
be secured from wandring at large in a Latitude of Prin-
ciples and Religion, they will not so easily set in with any
current of Schism, to be angled up by the *cunning craftiness*
of some lurking Impostor; adhering to those Doctrines and
Practices they were once thoroughly convinc'd to be founded up-
on the Word of GOD: their Lives and Studies will declare
them not only Orthodox but useful Members of this Church.
Surprising is the Progress of the Bounty of GOD, co-operat-
ing with the Charity of Man; upon this View it is not to be
surprisd of, but some of these tender Plants, thus water'd and
nurtur'd by your Care, may bring forth their Fruit in a more
convenient Station. Where you place an Alms, some kind hand
may graft a Scion of Learning, and GOD may superadd his
Gift of Wisdom, and call his *Samuel* up to a high Minis-
tration, even that of Prophecy or Preaching his Word. Some one
other of your Charge (if that may be of any weight) may
be made to appear before you in a more sacred Character, and
give access to this Grace *wherein we stand*. Possibly a Dis-
course upon this Occasion may hope to recommend itself to
our Affections, by being, in great measure, the Off-spring of the
most excellent Mother. So diffusive is your Charity, twin-
gling itself so early with the thread of Life, so happy in its remote
effects, and so good reason have we to pray for a Recompence
to be laid up with that GOD before whom we *Minister*. But
2. The Fruits of this good Work are not all confin'd with-
in the Walls of the Sanctuary, 'tis also most excellently cal-
culated for the Service of the State, which is one incontestable
Argument that has engaged our Governours, even the
royal Benefactress herself to appear in its Cause, and subdue
Opposition before it. Thus honour'd and promoted it has
found possession in all our Cities and most populous Places,
and

and travel'd under all the incumbrances of a burdensome expensive War along with it. And if it shall please GOD that now, upon the recovery of Peace, Charity, her Eldest Sister shall enlarge her Empire and take into her Arms whole Legions of Youth, thus Religiously Taught and decently Cloathed, the Miseries this Nation has formerly groan'd under, may be happily prevented for the future; not only shall the growing Generation will, by these wise Methods be better principled than to practice those Sins that make such Calamities necessary; but they will have a large understanding than to be drawn into the Causes and Occasions of them. They will value themselves more upon the Advantages of their Education, than to be the senseless mechanick Tools of some crafty Demagogue and Ringleader Faction. They'll scorn to go on like their Forefathers, blind implicit Rout, easily led to act their own Ruin. It may be a senseless and illiterate Crew, that can be stun'd with the stale outcries of *Popery* and *Slavery*, so as to suffer the snare Net to be drawn once more over their forgetful Heads. Unless we assign it wholly to the Judgment of Divine Infatuation 'tis hard to conceive how such Multitudes, capable of reasoning better, could have hitherto suffered their Judgments to be so grossly imposed upon, as to reconcile it to the Grace of the pretended Saints, to foment Schism, *i.e.* Confusion of every evil Work; or to their Christianity, to oppose all endeavours for Unity, Order, and Peace; or to their Allegiance, to propagate such Principles as will allow of dethroning or martyring the rightful Sovereign; or to common Honesty, to profess Religion established, and yet help on all pernicious designs to undermine it.

This must proceed from palpable Ignorance and a total defect of Erudition, or else spring from the wicked and perverse principling of Youth; teaching 'em the Fundamentals of Sedition: A way of Education, of which the Devil himself is Tutor, as much to the detriment and debauching of Youth,

3. Your pious endeavour is for the *training them up in Godliness and Honesty, in the way that they should go*; The Knowledge you communicate to them is so peaceful and pure, the Methods of conveying it so legal and publick-sanctified, that they can lie under no ill Prejudices: If Gratitude should incline them to be partial, they have no dangerous President before them: If they follow their own with your Services, they follow the Nations and the Churches Benefactors. And your Bounty will set them fair for doing some Service

the World, which would otherwise have been omitted; giving your Instructions with Industry and Honesty, they will come, by GOD's Blessing, to make atolerable Figure in the World, and be themselves Benefactors in their turns.

And what Charity can they better practice and encourage, than that they have found so useful to their own Well-being? As they are themselves the best Argument on their side, they need no better Advocate than their own Improvements, to engage or recompence your Protection. But,

The Advantages are not all on their part, it being a far more blessed thing to give than to receive; yourselves will have an Account in it. Your Charity, whether it be or be not useful to every one of these to a good Life, as it is most likely to be, *will turn into your own bosom*: GOD will reward it to your Families and Children, what you lay out upon these Orphans and Destitutes: The Priest has a Blessing to pronounce to you for every *Samuel* you bring into the Temple. *We wish you good luck in the Name of the Lord. Blessed is he that considereth the Poor, the Lord shall deliver him in time of trouble, and make his Bed for him in his distress: yea, the Lord will preserve him and keep him from all evil, and he shall be blessed upon earth.* Since there is no greater delight than that which generous Minds perceive in transferring Benefits on the Needy, you can lie under no Apprehensions of purchasing this serene Pleasure at too dear a rate; you know not in what ample Measure it may please GOD to increase your *Garners* and augment *your Stores*, and provide the *Olivebranches* about *your Table*, for thus enlarging the Company of those that Worship him in *Spirit and Truth*. This is an Action you can never regret; and a Satisfaction will arise from it at the last reflecting Hour, greater than you can receive at present, even in this Holy Place, and with all these agreeable Objects of your Charity before you; for then your good Works shall follow you with Comfort, and GOD shall refresh you upon the bed of languishing.

But now to leave the Substance of this Matter more immediately upon your Thoughts, as the genuine Result of the ample and Scope of the Application. You have been by this apprized of the many signal Blessings that display themselves on every side, to those that are Promoters of this Religious Undertaking. What Work then can we better set our hands to with all our Might? What Device, what Counsel can be more beneficial, not only to these Little Ones, but to the great important Interests of true Religion and Piety, and our

our National Happiness? Which will all in this life be the Blessing of GOD, and under a Righteous Administration be safely handed down to late Posterity.

Give me Leave to add one farther, and yet superior Gratification, because taken from a better Covenant and Christian: When this Generation shall pass away, they thus *perfect Holiness* shall go into an immense and *ward in another World*, where they shall see GOD face, and appear before him with the *ministering Angels* at his heavenly throne. O! let us prepare for that happy progress, to be associated with Kings, and Priests, and Saints in Glory. The best way to dispose and qualify ourselves is to join Charity with our Piety.

Whilst therefore we are here met together with one voice to pray to our heavenly Father for the Peace and Prosperity of our *Jerusalem*, and to render thanks for the great *fits which we have received at his hands*; let us look up with an Eye of Compassion upon the *Wants of these helpless creatures*; and consider, that all our other good Deeds, without Charity, will be so far from entitling us to a heavenly Reward, that they will be of no avail to us at all. Let us stand upon surer Grounds: Those that intend Profit here below find their Interest in advancing much upon Publick Credit.

But is there not another sort of Establishment above, more firm than the Mountains, higher than the Clouds, and not subject to change? Is there not an evidence of things unseen, clearer than the Noon-day? Will any Christian refuse to deposite upon the Security of his Religion, and the Promise of his Saviour? or scruple to purchase a Stock of Eternity, the only enduring Fund? Know ye not that he that now *goeth on his way weeping*, in compassion to the necessities of the Poor, and *beareth forth good Seed*, of Charity and other good Works, shall doubtless come again *with him* and bring his *Sheaves* with him.

At the Harvest of the World when CHRIST shall appear and take it upon himself to reward all such Acts of Goodness done in his Name, saying, *I was naked and ye clothed me*; then shall *this Mortal put on Immortality*, and be adorned with Robes of Righteousness and Glory; and our merciful Lord shall welcome all his Faithful Servants to his Joy, with all the Love of a Redeemer, the Compassion of a High Priest, and the Bowels of a Parent, saying, *Come ye Children, inherit the Kingdom.*

To which GOD of his infinite Goodness and Mercy will conduct and receive us all. Amen.